1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

343 But in many villages instead of a communal *pedawo'gha'i* there is a separate hut at the back of each long-house for the use of the 841 residents of each house contained in the long-house, called by the same name; or else in each house there is a *pedawo'gha'i* room known generally as *hala*,[1] with a door opening at the back of the house, separated from the rest of the house by a *binda* or low mud threshold about three feet from the back door. It is absolutely [784] *polo* or taboo for any male to set foot in the menstruation hut or room; I once saw a son who wanted to enter the house by the back door take a flying leap from outside so as to land beyond the *binda*. In every *hala* room there is a complete set of cooking vessels and utensils for the woman to use while she is in her courses, when it is *polo* for her to touch any of the regular household articles. The menstruation hut or room is also the scene of all child-births.

485 There is in some big villages a resting hut for travellers or State officials, known as the *paik-gotul* or *Kos-gotul*; *paik* is the word used for a member of the old militia, and *Kos* is the general word used by all Gonds for Hindus. This may also have a stable attached.

361 The sketch-plan on page 105 illustrates a fairly typical Hill Maria [35] village, crowning a mountain spur; it represents the site occupied in 1930 by the Kutru Mar village of Karangal. The long-houses here had nearly all of them bamboo fences between them and the street, running along their front about three or four feet from their front wall. The doors have been shown only in the houses in long-house no. 6. The fences only give a little privacy, and spaces useful for storing fuel; they are not garden (*bari*) enclosures. Bamboo is very plentiful around Karangal; where it is less common, these fences are absent. The stockades of thick poles at the eastern side of this village were made to afford protection from the fierce and cold wind blowing off the hills from the north-east. The [778] Village Mother's shrine was a cylindrical basket of stones resting on five boulders in the open space between the dormitory and the *kasyeq-gaita's* house, near the latter's *udam-garia* seat of honour. This seat was a flat slab of stone resting on five thin slabs stuck vertically in the ground. The *pen-rawar* shrine of the clan-god Koruk Pen was a round hut surrounded with a bamboo fence to the east of the village by the side of the path leading to the *penda* fields; there is another shrine of this god at Nugur, a Parllo clan village a few miles away in the Indrawati valley. In Karangal 361 the only non-Maria was a Maria-speaking Rawat herdsman, who ● 621 was allowed a house site at some distance from the main street; [194]

[1] Or *ala*; the aspirate is often dropped by Hill Marias.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

and every Maria house was occupied by members of the Parllo clan, the only partial exception being the empty house (no. 1-a) which had till recently been occupied by a youth of the Deda clan, which may intermarry with the Parllo clan, serving as *lamana'i* to win the niece of Parllo Murra, occupant of house no. 1-d. It will be observed that some long-houses have a joint menstruation hut at the rear of the house, while in some there is a separate *kala* for each house in the long-house. The *kasyeq-gaita's* house is at the dormitory end of the street, a very usual position.

The shifting of villages

It has already been implied that though a village site may be abandoned for superstitious reasons, the predominant reason is economic, the exhaustion of the *penda* slopes that can be conveniently cultivated from the existing village. If three or more *kaghai* (*penda* sites) can be dealt with from one *paghai* or village site, then the village may remain on that site for seven or eight years, even though there are other *paghai* in the other *penda* sites cultivated from it; or if any portion of the last *penda* site to be cultivated is very remote from it, then a few houses may be shifted there. What makes the old topographical survey maps so useless for finding a modern village is that they mark only the village site occupied in the sixties, generally, too, by the particular name of that site, not by the general name of the village. The big village of Orcha, for example, is not marked as such, but by the name of its *paghai* Hoinar. A reference to the sketch map of the parish (to use a term more suitable than 'village') of Handawada in Dantewara Mar (opposite p. 108) will make the position clear. The parish has ten alternative *kaghai* cultivation sites, viz.:—

1. Kawar *kaghai*, 1st half.
2. Ditto, 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta *kaghai*.
4. Hitangpal *kaghai*.
5. Kurmelnar *kaghai*.
6. Rekarai *kaghai*.
7. Handawada *kaghai*, 1st half.
8. Ditto, 2nd half.
9. Ahekele *kaghai*, 1st half.
10. Ditto, 2nd half.

Of these, nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 only contained *paghai* village sites. In February 1930 the main village was still settled in no. 9, but the *penda* slopes in nos. 9 and 10 had been exhausted, and those in no. 1 had been partly cultivated for the first year and were being reaped. Nos. 9 and 10 had lasted for six years and, though the villagers had started to cultivate no. 1 a long way below the village site in no. 9 and on the other side of the Goinder river, they were only then at harvest time starting to shift the village to the *paghai* in no. 2; in fact, the labour of the first year's work of clearing and cultivating a fresh *penda* slope is so heavy that the shifting of the village itself is, when necessitated by the distance of the existing site

[text continues on p. 109]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

361
241
621
427

Key to Figure 6

Kaghai Names (see p. 107).

1. Kawar, 1st half.
2. Do., 2nd half.
3. Irapmeta.
4. Hitanggal.
5. Kurmelnar.
6. Rekarai.
7. Handawada, 1st half.
8. Do., 2nd half.
9. Abekele, 1st half.
10. Do., 2nd half.

The letters against fields in nos. 2 and 3 and houses and granaries in nos. 1, 3, 9 and 10 refer to the tenants in the list below. Tenants A to N are Gume by clan, O to Q, Tamo.

(*Abbreviations.*—M = mother, W = wife, S = grown-up son, b = boy child, g = girl child, D = marriageable daughter.)

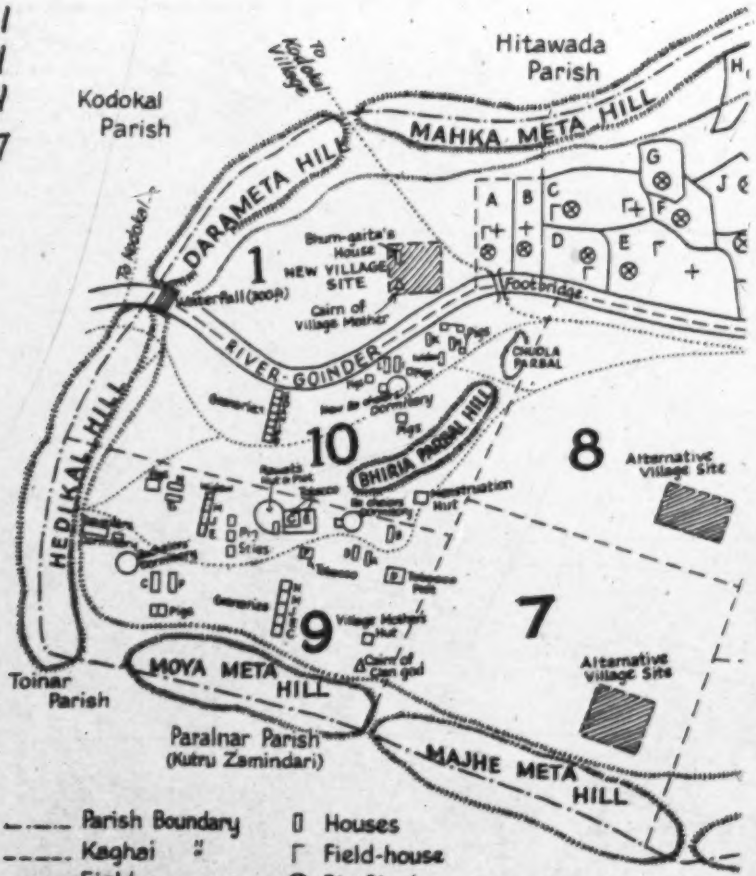
Letter	*Tenant*	*Family*	*Area in acres*	*Rent* Rs. a.
A	Modi s/o Malla	M., cousin's widow	5·00	2 4
B	Lalu s/o Banda, Bhum-gaita	W., 1 b.	4·50	1 12
C	Banda s/o Bursai	W., 2 g.	6·25	3 8
D	Horra s/o Musra	W., 1 g.	3·50	2 4
E	Masa s/o Kule, gaita	W., 1 S., 1 g.	7·50	4 12
F	Pido s/o Doga	W., 1 b.	3·50	2 0
G	Irpa s/o Karanje	W.	1·50	1 8
H	Rama s/o Peda Junga s/o Rama	W., 1 S., 2 g.	4·50	2 4 1 8
I	Kohla s/o Pahandi	W., 1 D., 1 man serving to win daughter's hand	4·00	1 8
J	Doga s/o Wijja	W., 1 b., 1 g.	4·00	1 12
K	Kuma s/o Boda	W., 1 g.	4·50	1 4
L	Juga s/o Wijja	M.	1·50	2 0
M	Malla s/o Gorra, Kasyeq-gaita	W., 1 S., 1 b., 1 g.	5·50	2 4
N	Pahandi s/o Karanje	W., M.	2·50	2 12
O	Hara s/o Pandu	W.	3·00	2 4
P	Bandi s/o Kuli	W., M., 2 b.	5·00	2 12
Q	Musra s/o Pandu	W.	2·25	2 4
		Total Acres	68·50	Rs. 40 12

There was also in Abekele Kaghai no. 9 a house shared by a Rawat and a Telugu with a small tobacco plot paying 4 annas rent 4

Rs. 41 0

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

361
241
● 624
427



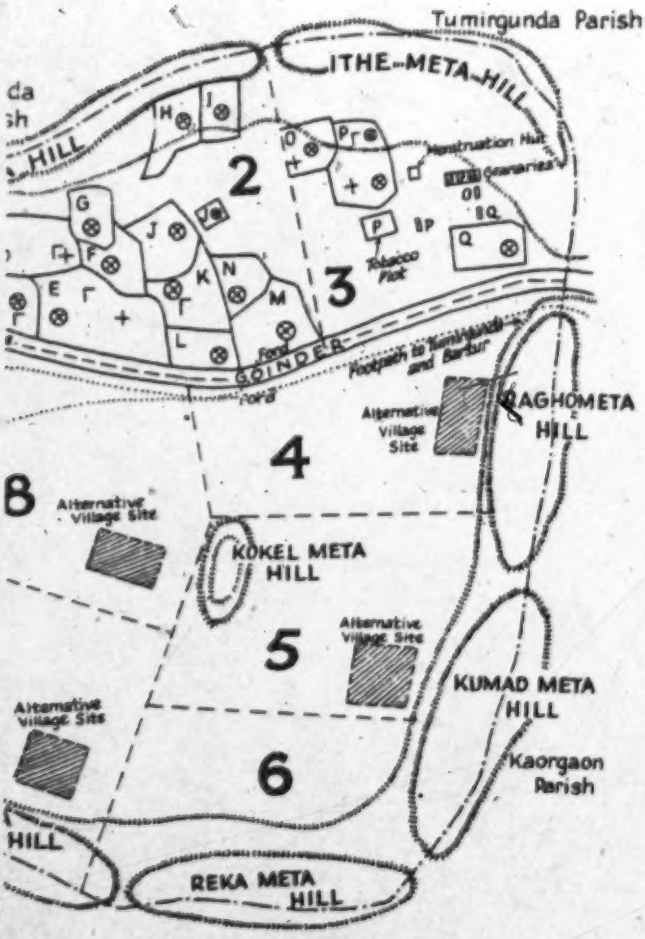
The buildings etc. in Kaghai Nos 9 & 10 are of course drawn too large in comparison to the areas of the fields in Nos 2 & 3; actually they left ample room for fields in Nos 9 & 10, but had become more scattered when those fields became exhausted

FIGURE 6
PARISH MAP OF HANDAWADA

[p. 108(A)]

I:Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

361
241
●621
427



IGURE 6
OF HANDAWADA

[p. 108(B)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

from the fresh cultivation site, postponed till after the first harvest has been raised on the latter. This is inconvenient only to the women, as from the time when the new *kosra* comes into ear till the harvest is over all the men sleep apart from their wives in their fields, while their womenfolk have to sleep in the village, it being taboo for women to sleep in the fields and to have sexual intercourse during this period. As it was inconvenient for the bachelors to sleep in the dormitory (*gotul-lon*) on the hill-top village in Ahekele *paghai*, a temporary dormitory had been made near the river, actually in Ahekele *kaghai* no. 10, but close to the bridge by which the villagers crossed the river to their *penda* fields in Kawar *kaghai*; and there were also four houses there, and a row of granaries, that site having been more convenient for some of the villagers whose fields had been on the lower slopes of *kaghai* no. 10 when that was being cultivated. Handawada is a village of the Gume clan; and all the houses in the village on Ahekele *paghai*, those by the river in *kaghai* no. 10, and the one advance-guard house in Kawar *paghai*, as well as all the *penda* fields in Kawar *kaghai* no. 1, belonged to members of the Gume clan: but in the small Irpmeta *kaghai* no. 3 three families of the Tamo clan, with which the Gume clan may intermarry, had been allowed to have *penda* cultivation and to build houses and granaries; the wives had all been Gume girls. In the new village site, Kawar *paghai*, one villager had already built his house, to which I referred above as the advance-guard house, because he had been sent to make an experimental *penda* field in Kawar *kaghai* no. 1 a year in advance of the rest of the villagers, in accordance with custom; on the success of this experimental cultivation depends the villagers' decision whether to migrate *en masse* in the following year. There was also a newly made cairn close by where a ceremony in honour of the Village Mother had been performed as an essential preliminary to the shifting of the village. When I next camped in the parish in March 1934, the villagers had for three years occupied Kawar *paghai*, and the houses were dirty and smoke-blackened; the villagers had found the site feverish and unhealthy owing to its proximity to the river, there had been several deaths, and Kawar *kaghai* nos. 1 and 2 had each been exhausted in two years. Their Tamo relatives had exhausted Irpmeta *kaghai* and left the parish. The *Bhum-gaita* and another villager had been sent ahead to make experimental *penda* plots in Hitangpal *kaghai* (no. 4), and the villagers proposed to shift the village during 1935 to the village site in that *kaghai* or the adjacent Kurmelnar *kaghai* (no. 5); the experiments in Hitangpal had succeeded, and the villagers were to start their *penda* felling in a few days.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

361 The population is comparatively small, and the land available for
[423] the shifting *penda* cultivation is very extensive. There is practically no individual property in *penda* land, and it is recognized only in permanent rice fields.

361 In comparison, the Bison-horn Maria country is thickly
244 populated; there is far more permanent rice cultivation; much
178 old *penda* land has lost its forest growth, or is getting steadily slower in recuperating it after each time when it is felled and burnt for *penda* cultivation; and each villager likes to have a large *bari*
● 62 or garden enclosure at the back of his house or in the immediate neighbourhood of the village where he can grow tobacco, maize, chillies, tomatoes and sesamum, and can pen his cattle for the sake of their manure. In consequence, economic considerations now operate in favour of the permanency of Bison-horn Maria villages and against their being shifted; as the pressure on the land has become greater the alternative sites (*padar*), to which in past generations a village was from time to time shifted, have been permanently occupied by hamlets (*para*) of that village, and the settlers in the hamlets have permanently occupied the adjacent *penda* sites once cultivated in rotation by the shifting village. Many big Bison-horn villages have six or seven hamlets, some of which are virtually separate villages, and are beginning to assert a separate identity by having their own headmen and sometimes their own village priests, though on formal occasions all will still gather together at the original *padar* of the village and its hamlets, and acknowledge there the authority of the headman and priest of the parent village. In the Abujhmar hills, moreover, each village is still inhabited almost entirely by members of one clan, and all the lands of the villages are regarded as the lands of the clan. But in the Bison-horn country, though each parish is still said to be the *bhum* (earth) of the clan which first settled there, yet there are generally in the village many houses of other clans and wife-clans, from whom the first settlers and their descendants have taken wives. Though they will still say that a certain village is the *bhum*
[423] of the clan that founded it, yet in consequence of the many representatives of other clans settled there now the village and its lands are not looked on as that clan's property in anything like the same degree as among the Hill Marias, nor in actual fact is the original clan so free to shift the village as it was before it allowed its wife-clans to share its village site and cultivable lands. Often, too, the headman is no longer a member of the settler clan. If,
[166] therefore, a Bison-horn village does shift in these days, the move is probably due to superstitious motives, or to epidemic or epizootic disease.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

the family and clan to which she goes as a bride. She may elope with another man, but he must compensate the first husband. She must work for her husband, having his meals ready in the home or taking them to him in the field when he wants them, gathering forest fruits and roots, and doing her appointed work in the fields; many a woman has paid with her life by exasperating her tired husband by not having his food ready or by cooking it badly. She is not a full human being like a man. She is taboo when menstruating; she may not sleep in the field when the crops are ripening; she is debarred from attending at the festivals and *pandum*; she has no special dancing dress. Yet with all this she has not too bad a position. As a girl she has considerable freedom both in pre-marital sexual life and in the choice of a husband, and she is fairly free to leave her husband if he ill-treats her, or if he cannot beget a child. Tribal sentiment strongly condemns wife-beating. Her natural taste for ornament is given full scope, her parents gradually collecting beads and metal neck and arm rings, her boy-companion presenting her with beads and carved hair-combs, and her husband when she is married recognizing her right to spend a few of the scanty pice she earns from the sale of her basketry at the bazaar on simple trinkets. She participates in the tribal dances and songs, though not in the religious ceremonies that accompany them. In fact her position *vis-a-vis* her husband is far freer than that of the ordinary Hindu wife. Above all, she is not exposed to the evil of child marriage and premature motherhood, of which habits of their Hindu neighbours Maria headmen will speak with abhorrence.

Such in brief and imperfect outline are the main principles governing tribal law and custom, and the main features of the old village and tribal headman and *panchayat* organization. No attempt has been made in this chapter to draw any clear-cut distinction between the ways of the Hill and the Bison-horn Marias; in actual practice both treat such matters in much the same way, the main distinctions being (*a*) that the primitive clan organization is stronger and the authority of the headmen more limited by that of elders among the Hill Marias, and (*b*) that the Bison-horn Maria has been more in contact with the outer Hindu world than the Hill Maria.

The recent State Order restoring jurisdiction to Panchayats

Under the State Order framed in 1932 by my successor, the regular criminal courts of the State have been deprived of jurisdiction over the primitive tribes in cases of certain public nuisances, simple hurt and assault, thefts (except of cattle), of property worth Rs. 5 or less, mischief, trespass, house-trespass, bigamy, adultery and

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

Appendix II

618
632
621
776

Lists of Hill Maria Clans and Bison-horn Maria Clans and Phratries, and Pedigree of the Hill Maria Family holding the Hereditary Headmanship of Chhota Dongar Pargana and Orcha Village

[(d) Signifies that the village was deserted in 1934]

Hill Maria Clans

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Usendi	Chhota Dongar	Orcha Japgunda Hoinar (d) Juwada Dugarli Bagom Thadur Machan Duseli Kejang (d) Uragonda (d)	Wikir Hunga (kept at Japgunda, but brought to Orcha for festivals)	Goat
	Kutru Mar	Michwada	None	
	Kirangal (*not Hill Maria but Gotul Muria*)	One or two villages	?	
	Chanda District	?	?	
Wadder	Chhota Dongar	Dhanora Jori Hikpulla Kodeli Perilmeta Rengabera (d)	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda	None
	Bhomra (Muria)	Kurselhur	Use Dokra of Kurselhur	
	Chanda District, and Kutru S. of Indrawati	Kaunde and others, and Madhepar and a few more in Kutru	Kuwo-Gundo of Kaunde	
Korami	Chhota Dongar	Hirangal Verma	Worship the Usendi god of Japgunda	None

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

618
632
621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dodi	Do.	Jhara Rajpur Idnar	Do.	None
Deda	Chhota Dongar	Kurmer Dedalur	Nule Harma or Eram Mo'itto of Kurmer	None
Parsal	Do.	Chalcheghi	Do.	None
Katlami	Do.	Jhori Hilkpulla (shared with Wadder)	Pandu Hunga of Jhori, elder brother of Wikir Hunga, the Usendi god	None
Jughо, *alias* Karme (plural, Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar	Adeq Karanmeta (d) Akmeta (d) Maspur (d) Nelanar Makawada Gomagal Hasnar Rainar	Worships the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda	None; the name Karme said to mean 'sunset', the ancestor of clan having been born then
	Bhairamgarh Mar	Gapa (d) Itulnar	Say would worship Wikir Hunga if still in Chhota Dongar *pargana*, but no need as now in Kutru zamindari	
Dhurwa (almost a branch of Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar	Share Gomagal and Hasnar with Jughalor	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda but have also his sister Oghal Muttai as their own god	None; clan says it is elder brother of Jughalor

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

618
632
621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dol ('younger brothers' of Jughalor)	Do.	Kohkapaghai	Worship Usendi god Wikir Hunga	Called Dol because members started making *dol* drums
Matami	Do.	Teknar	Do.	None
Dugher	Do.	Maramnar	Do.	None
Potawi	Do.	Almost extinct; one house in Orcha	Do.	None
Poyami	Do.	Kundali (one house)	Do.	None
Gecha	Do. Mangnar	Udala Tondawada Wetekal (d)	Do.	None. Name means 'sluggard' clan
Neghal	Chhota Dongar	Bhera Tondawada	Do.	Panther
Ahkal	Do.	Gudadi	Do.	None
Ete[1]	Do.	Kondakoti	Nule Harma of Kurmer	? Crab
Boka	Do.	Dondrewada Bokalur		None
Kohla	Chhota Dongar	Mandali Kushnar Batwada Kostari Gumter Hoinger Devanar Kerinar Irpenar	Mu'ima Kohla Pen of Batwada	?
Padal	Padalibhum	All the *pargana*	Gumtuli Muttai, of Adnar	None
Kumoti	Chhota Dongar	Almost extinct; 2 houses in Hasnar, 1 in Rainar	None	None
Jiti	Jatwara	Most of the *pargana*	?	?

[1] Ete is probably the same as Yete, a Kutru Mar clan.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

618
632
621
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Boter	Kutru Mar	Boter	None	None
Wachami	Kutru Mar and Ahiri (mostly Indrawati valley)	Kumharmeta Markanar Irkapal Karkelli Bodeli and some Ahiri villages	Wachami Moitto Pen of Kumharmeta	?
Mohanda	Kutru Mar	Lakka Hingmeta Bhuri Puslakka	A god at Lakka	?
Oyāmi	Bhairamgarh Mar	Komu Kalhaza Malahanar (d)	None	None
Mohke	Do. Chhota Dongar	2 houses in Kalhaza Albera (d)	None	None
Yete	Bhairamgarh Mar	Hoinar	None	Crab
Pungati	Do.	2 houses in Ader (Kutru)	None	?
Bardāl	Bardal Tapalibhum	Whole *pargana* Ranimarka	Hurra Mu'iya of Kornār	None
Farsāl	Farsāl	Whole *pargana* (13 inhabited villages)	Kodo Mo'itto of Dhurwada	None
	Bhairamgarh	Bheriabhum	None	
Gōtāl	Hukkagotal	Whole *pargana* (9 inhabited villages)	Pāhanleya Muttari of Toinar in Tulsagotal	None
	Tulsagotal	Whole *pargana* (9 inhabited villages)	Do.	None
	Farsigotal	Whole *pargana* (5 inhabited villages)	Top Mudya of Mohandi, said to be younger brother of Pahanley's husband	None

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill. Maria

618
621
632
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Tapa	Tapâlibhûm (Chhote Mar)	Nearly all the villages of the *pargana*	Riksa Pen of Dodrimarka in Tapalibhûm	None
Nughoti, *alias* Nuroti	Nurbhum jâtwara Tapalibhum	All *pargana* but Turko Kohkameta Markawada Hachekote	?	None
Hichami	Nurbhum	Turko	The Nughoti god	?
Parlio	Kutru Mar	Dodmarka Karangul Nugur Ader (Kutru) Padmeta	Koruk Pen of Karangal and Nugur	Goat
Jâtâ	Kutru Mar Chhote Dongar	Jâtalur Akdum (d)	None	?
Kohka	Bhairamgarh Mar	Kakowada, or Kakawoki	None	Kohka-marra the marking-nut tree
Ark	Do.	Korowaya; sold Itulnar to Jughalor	None	None
Jâte (plural, Jâterom)	Mangnar	Mornar	Pat Raja	The Jâte grass used for making brooms to sweep the god's shrine
Tokalor	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *toka* or flap of loincloth left to hang behind like a tail
Hukur	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *huk* or basketry ladle used to stir rice cooked at the god's shrine

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

618
621
632
776

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Marvi	Mangnar	Tōkhtōll Kuwer Modangwada Moghori	Mārā-māgh, Pat Raja's sister's son or *bārawjal*. They get leave from Pat Raja to hold his nephew's festivals	?
Tamo	Dantewara Mar	Tumirgunda Padmeta	Hurra Gunda Moitto of Tumir-gunda	None
Atami[1]	Barsur	Chhota Karka Palawaya	Do.	?
Leka.mi[1]	Barsur	Batawada Ghotpal	Use Modia of Ghotpal	?

There were one or two Lekami houses in the Hill Maria villages of Handawada and Dunga.

Gume	Dantewara or Barsur Mar	Toinar Handawada Hikul Thakawada Paralnar Prinkapal Kodokal Hitawada	Verma Mo'itto Pen of Toinar. The *waddai* is Jātē by clan	None
	Bhairamgarh	Kunjewada Goti Dunga Pariakot	None	
Alami	Mangnar	Nendur Gatia	Attend festivals of Pat Raja, god of Jāt-erom at Mornar	Chameleon (alām)
Nonde	Mangnar	Rotad	Do.	Rope

[1] Now, in culture, Bison-horn clans; but the Lekami intermarries with the Gume clan, and the Atami still worships the Hill Maria *pen* of the Tamo clan.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

same ceremonies and festivals are observed in connexion with cutting and firing of the *penda*, sowing, harvesting and first eating of the new crops. Most of the reaping of the 'big *kosra*' crops had been completed, but that of the '*os kosra*' millets and pulses was still in progress. For many of the *penda* plots in the current *kaghai* cultivation clearing (see p. 107) this was the second and last year of cultivation, and the *kuthi* crop raised was known as *hiwar*, a term, according to the *Gazetteer*,[1] always technically applied to these second year crops. I sent specimens of both *hiwar* and *kosra* of *kohala* (see p. 134) for identification to the Nagpur Agricultural College: botanically both were identical. These villages have never had the advantage of the special system of poll-tax assessment on every able-bodied axeman in the village which I devised for Bastar (p. 145). The system followed in these hill villages of Ahiri is roughly this. Each *penda* is cut by a number of villagers with the approval of the *gaita*, and the portion cut by each of them is roughly marked by one or other of the methods indicated on page 131. Help is taken from other villagers, who are always ready to give this mutual aid, and at harvest the produce is divided among the different share-holders of the *penda*, with something also for all who helped to clear the *penda*; sometimes a number of plots are specially earmarked for division of the produce by the *gaita* and elders amongst all who joined in clearing the whole *kaghai* and in watching and fencing the crops; a part of the produce is also allocated to villagers too old and feeble to work. The zamindar's *kamdar* or agent is paid rent, usually in kind, by the *gaita* for the whole village, for paying which the *gaita* takes a share of the produce of each *penda* plot. The village cultivation is in fact a truly co-operative enterprise.

I have alluded above to the arbitrary stopping in the plains Maria villages of the Chanda zamindaris of *dahi* cultivation, and the consequent increase of debt among the Marias. This Kuvakodi hill tract is fortunate, however, in having escaped this prohibition; it is the only Ahiri area where *penda* reigns undisturbed. It was therefore no surprise to find not a single case of old debt among the fifty or sixty Hill Maria cultivators who assembled at my camp from Kuvakodi and the other hill villages. Occasionally when crops are poor and the *kamdar* has to be paid rent in cash, the *gaita* goes to a Teli money-lender in the plains to borrow the money. But the villagers look on this as the debt of the whole village, not of the *gaita*, and though the Teli is as unscrupulous here as in any plains village in exacting high interest, yet the combined villagers are usually able to repay in kind in a year or two. Nowadays sometimes not only they, but even their Bastar neighbours, instead of resorting

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 170.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

to the Telis, send relays of young men to earn the needed cash by working at Allapilli, and it is noteworthy that these workers do not regard the wages thus earned as their individual property, but as the earnings of the village which sent them there and provided them with food for the journey. Let us hope that the economic self-sufficiency which has hitherto kept these hillmen out of the clutches of the money-lender will be preserved (which means that their *ponda* must not be stopped). They are subject, however, to three pests. The first is the frequently corrupt *kamdar* of the zamindar. The second are the village watchmen or *kotwar*, generally of Mahra or kindred untouchable castes, to whose circles these hill villages are attached. These Mahras have their headquarters in plain villages, whence they make periodic tours of the hill villages to levy various illegal dues from the Hill Marias. The third pest is the itinerant cloth pedlar, usually a Mahra, who supplies cloth on credit and then tries to levy a perpetual tribute in kind. I met one of these men in this tour during my visit to the adjacent Bastar village of Nelanguri. Bazaars are so remote that these pedlars, if they could be prevented from selling on credit, and be made to charge reasonable prices, would fulfil a useful function. All these abuses could be checked by effective official touring: Mr. Kerawala's and my visits were unfortunately red-letter events in the Marias' lives.

Dancing at Kuvakodi was all in the traditional Hill Maria style, but sadly inferior to dances at such Bastar centres as Orcha or Handawada, although at least half the dancers were Bastar Marias. But even in physical type these Marias from the western fringes of the Abujhmar Mountains are inferior. Here, as I noted of Bastar during my March 1934 visit, the Maria dancer has given up the rib-dress or *gatiharhana*, the dancing-shield and the gay head-dress and skirt, though he still retains the traditional buttock-bells, the songs, the *pata-bhita* or 'song fellows' and the dance-steps.[1]

The descent back to the Lahiri camp was almost more tiring than the climb had been. Lahiri that evening was full of an eager crowd, to watch the dancing and partake of the liquor that was ready for the dancers. Here the dancing was lively and vital, but differed in various ways from Hill Maria dancing, if of Hill Maria type. The *dol* drumming was marked, even though the single-membrane *turam* drum more typical of the Hill Maria was much in evidence. Perhaps, however, the strongest impression was the astonishing wealth of 'jewellery' worn by the girls: enquiry showed that apart from strings of beads, almost all the silver and brass and aluminium necklets, armlets and other trinkets worn by the women had been purchased from metal-workers in Bastar State. There seemed here

[1] See pp. 75-6 and 183-4.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

Man and wife generally settle down at first in a small hut of their own. But there is a sort of joint family system with the father or elder brother as the patriarchal head, and sometimes a large family occupies an entire hamlet of its own in one part of the village territory. The institution of the cross-cousin marriage tends to unite families very closely.

This happy and united family life is disturbed by several causes. One, as we have seen, is the commonplace invasion of the happiness of two people by a third. Another is the presence of the husband's younger brother in the house, and the privileged relationship which he has with the elder brother's wife. Another is the custom that allows a married girl to visit her mother's house. Yet another is man's insatiable passion for domestic experiment which leads to the complicated and dubious joys of plural marriage.

It will be of interest to compare with this the situation in ordinary Hindu families, where the common disparity of age between husband and wife creates stresses from which the Maria are free. 'There are tendencies at work within the family institution itself which sometimes lead to criminal action. The joint family rests upon the mutual toleration and sacrifice of the different members of the household. While forbearance is the outcome of long discipline in joint family life, it is put to a severe test as a result of the growth of individualism. Again, the disparity between the ages of husband and wife, of parents-in-law and girl-wife, offers opportunities of exploitation and even cruelty. The custom of infant marriage is apt to promote oppression, especially where there is a striking difference in age between the husband and the wife. Cases of cruelty to young wives are often brought to the courts in India.

'In 1929 a Hindu weaver in Hyderabad, who had married a young girl, chained her like an animal to a big mill-stone to prevent her making frequent attempts to run away. She subsequently died.

'In another case in the same year a young girl-wife who was being forcibly taken to her husband's house managed to free herself, jumped into a wayside well, and was drowned'.[1]

[1] Kalkarwal, op. cit., p. 35.

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
AW32 Gond AW32

INTRODUCTION

101 NO aboriginal people of India has attained greater prominence on the political scene of past centuries than the large group of tribes commonly known by the generic term Gond. When the mist that still veils long periods in the history of the Deccan finally lifts, Gonds appear not only as the main population of wide areas in the very heart of India, described after them as Gondwana, but also as a ruling race equal in power and material status to many contemporary Hindu princes. Lacking unity and leadership the Gond states collapsed before the successive onslaughts of Moghul and Maratha armies, but the Gond populations remained, the old feudal system continued to function in [21] many remote tracts and several Gond rajas enjoy up to this day the status of ruling chiefs. But besides the advanced sections of the Gonds who vied with Hindus in the fields of war and statesmanship, there were and still are the great masses of primitive peasants and forest dwellers on a cultural level no higher than that of other aboriginal populations in the Central Indian zone. Of their economics, social organization and religion, historical sources tell us next to nothing, and the study of Gond culture, as a distinct element in the culture pattern of India, falls to the anthropologist, who finds an almost overwhelming wealth of material among the many vigorous branches of the Gond family.

184 101 [199] Spread over an area considerably larger than the British Isles and extending from the Godavari gorges in the south to the Vindhya Mountains in the north, the Gonds are neither racially, nor culturally, nor linguistically a homogeneous population. So great are the differences in custom and material circumstances between many of the widely scattered tribal groups that one may well wonder what causes them to be considered, and indeed to consider themselves, as members of the same race. Wherever we find Gonds, unless they are totally detribalized and merged with Hindu populations, they describe themselves as Gond or, if speaking Gondi, as Koitur, the universal equivalent of that name in all Gondi dialects. Were it not for those large groups of eastern Gonds, who speak Chhattisgarhi Hindi, the Gonds in the north-west of the Central Provinces, who speak western Hindi and the far smaller groups of Telugu speaking Gonds, better known as Koyas, in Hyderabad and Madras Presidency, it would probably be most satisfactory to replace, at least in ethnological usage, the general name "Gond" by the term "Gondi speaking populations," thus leaving it open whether there exists such an entity as a Gond people or only a group of peoples who to-day speak related languages. Indeed, I believe that we shall fall in